their appearance on the surface, but they are eternal in their essential power of manifestation; for they are held always implicit and potential in the essence of things and in the essential consciousness from which they emerge: timeless consciousness can always turn their abiding potentiality into terms of time actuality. The world would be unreal only, if itself and its forms were images without substance of being, figments of consciousness presented to itself by the Reality as pure figments and then abolished for ever. But if manifestation or the power of manifestation is eternal, if all is the being of Brahman, the Reality, then this unreality or illusoriness cannot be the fundamental character of things or of the cosmos in which they make their appearance.

A theory of Maya in the sense of illusion or the unreality of cosmic existence creates more difficulties than it solves; it does not really solve, the problem of existence, but rather renders it for ever insoluble. For, whether Maya be an unreality or a non-reality, the ultimate effects of the theory carry in them a devastating simplicity of nullification. Ourselves and the universe fade away into nothing-

ness or else keep for a time only a truth which is
little better than a fiction. In the thesis of the
pure unreality of Maya, all experience, all knowledge
as well as all ignorance, the knowledge that frees
us no less than the ignorance that binds us, world-
acceptance and world-refusal, are two sides of an
illusion; for there is nothing to accept or refuse,